

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 05393 271002Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 697

S E C R E T JAKARTA 5393

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NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ID
SUBJECT: JITTERS OVER THE ELECTIONS

REF: STATE 094104

1. WE PLAN PROVIDE DEPARTMENT FULL REPORT ON VARIOUS CON-
TESTANTS' ASSESSMENTS OF ELECTION OUTCOME ALONG WITH OUR
COMMENTS AT END OF WEEK WHEN WE HAVE COMPLETED ROUND OF CALLS
ON KEY CAMPAIGNERS, WHO ARE JUST NOW RETURNING FROM THE
PROVINCES. FOLLOWING, HOWEVER, IS A PREVIEW SUMMARY OF
SITUATION AS IT NOW APPEARS TO US:

A. HEARTENED BY LARGE ATTENDANCE AT THEIR RALLIES, SOME MOSLEM
SUPPORTERS OF DEVELOPMENT UNION PARTY (PPP) ARE TALKING OF
TAKING OVER 50 PERCENT OF VOTE IN JAKARTA, ACEH AND EAST JAVA
AND EXPECT GOOD SHOWINGS IN WEST JAVA, WEST SUMATRA AND SOME
OTHER SUMATRAN PROVINCES. THEY HAVE NOT ATTRIBUTED THIS TO
"BACKLASH" FROM GOLKAR TACTICS BUT SIMPLY TO FACT THAT, DESPITE
SOME GOLKAR ROUGHHOUSING AND CONSIDERABLE GOVERNMENTAL
PRESSURE, THE FAITHFUL HAVE NOT BEEN INTIMIDATED. PPP
SUPPORTERS DO NOT APPEAR VERY CONCERNED OVER GOLKAR HOUSE-TO-
HOUSE CALLS DURING QUIET WEEK BUT ARE WORRIED THAT OFFICIALS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JAKART 05393 271002Z

IN RURAL AREAS WILL SUBSTITUTE FALSE REPORT OF VOTE BREAK-
DOWN BY PARTY FOR ACTUAL COUNT (HENCE THE CONTROVERSY OVER
WITNESSES SIGNING ELECTION FORMS REPORTED JAKARTA 4997).
EMBASSY COMMENT: MOSLEM OPTIMISM MAY BE BASED ON OPTICS.
RALLY-GOERS CONSTITUTE ONLY SMALL PERCENTAGE OF VOTERS, BULK
OF WHOM ARE POLITICALLY PASSIVE AND THUS SUSCEPTIBLE TO
GUIDANCE OF LOCAL OFFICIALS. FAILURE TO OBTAIN EXPECTED VOTE

WOULD, HOWEVER, INCREASE MOSLEM TENDENCY TO YELL "TILT."

B. ALTHOUGH ADMITTING THAT THEY HAVE PROBLEMS IN CERTAIN AREAS GOLKAR LEADERS ALSO EXPRESS OPTIMISM, SOME CLAIMING THAT THEIR SHARE OF NATIONAL VOTE WILL RISE TO 70 PERCENT. THEY COUNT ON DOOR-TO-DOOR PERSUASION DURING QUIET WEEK TO WIPE OUT ANY PPP GAINS DURING CAMPAIGN PERIOD IN BELIEF THAT MOST INDONESIAN VOTERS ARE POLITICALLY UNSOPHISTICATED AND UNCOMMITTED AND CONSEQUENTLY FOLLOW LAST ADVICE RECEIVED FROM THEIR ELDERS (SEE JAKARTA A-49). WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF ANY CENTRALLY DIRECTED CONTINGENCY PLAN BY GOLKAR TO FALSIFY RETURNS. EMBASSY COMMENT: GOLKAR SEEMS TO BE OVERESTIMATING ITS STRENGTH IN URBAN AREAS AND IN PROVINCES SUCH AS EAST JAVA WHERE PPP AND TO MUCH LESS EXTENT PDI ARE STRONG COMPETITION. THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE GOOD GROUNDS, NEVERTHELESS, FOR FORECASTING SOLID GOLKAR MAJORITY.

C. MILITARY ASSESSMENTS OF A POOR GOLKAR SHOWING SEEM TO BE COMING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FROM LT. GEN. YOGA'S SIDE OF INTELLIGENCE COORDINATION BOARD (BAKIN). LT. GEN. MURTOPO'S STAFF, ON OTHER HAND, SHARE GOLKAR OPTIMISM MENTIONED ABOVE. AS REFTEL SUGGESTS, POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN MURTOPO AND YOGA UNDOUBTEDLY COLORS THEIR ESTIMATES. ARMED FORCES DEPUTY COMMANDER GEN. SURONO IN CONVERSATION WITH DUTCH AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT CONTRAST BETWEEN GOLKAR VOTE IN KEY POPULATION CENTERS AND THAT IN OTHER AREAS MIGHT BE MISREAD, IMPLYING THAT RACE MIGHT BE TIGHT IN JAKARTA AND OTHER CITIES. OTHERWISE, MILITARY LEADERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN ARE GENERALLY UPBEAT ON GOLKAR'S CHANCES.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 JAKARTA 05393 271002Z

2. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY'S PLANS FOR COVERING ELECTIONS: WE WILL, OF COURSE, CLOSELY MONITOR RETURNS AS THEY APPEAR AT JAKARTA ELECTION CENTER. ELECTION CENTER OFFICIALS TELL US THAT ACCURATE ESTIMATE OF NATIONAL COUNT WILL BE AVAILABLE BY EVENING OF MAY 3 BUT THEY MAY BE OVERESTIMATING CAPACITY OF THEIR COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM. TWO EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE REQUESTED PRESS PASSES TO VISIT POLLS IN JAKARTA AREA. OTHER OFFICERS FROM FRIENDLY EMBASSIES ARE DOING SAME AND WILL SHARE THEIR OBSERVATIONS WITH US. CONSULATES IN MEDAN AND SURABAYA ARE EXPLORING POSSIBILITY OF JUNIOR OFFICERS VISITING POLLS AND/OR ELECTION RETURN CENTERS. IN OTHER PROVINCIAL AREAS WE WILL BE DEPENDENT FOR FIRSTHAND INFORMATION ON PRESS, FOREIGN VISITORS AND INDONESIAN SOURCES. WE HAVE FOUND, HOWEVER, THAT INFORMATION FROM PROVINCES TRAVELS QUITE RAPIDLY NOT ONLY TO GOI INTELLIGENCE CENTERS BUT ALSO TO KEY "OPPOSITION" LEADERS, ESPECIALLY IN MOSLEM COMMUNITY. WE HAVE GOOD SOURCES IN THESE CIRCLES WHO WILL SHARE THEIR "FEEDBACK" WITH US.

3. IN APRIL 26 CONVERSATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION PRESS DIRECTOR SUKARNO, AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED AGAIN THE DESIRABILITY OF GIVING FOREIGN PRESS MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITIES TO OBSERVE ELECTIONS. HE WILL MAKE SAME POINTS TO FONMIN ADAM MALIK, WHOM HE HAS APPOINTMENT TO SEE ON APRIL 30. SUKARNO SAID ABOUT 20 FOREIGN REPORTERS WERE NOW SCHEDULED TO BE IN COUNTRY DURING ELECTION PERIOD. IN ADDITION TO THOSE RESIDENT IN INDONESIA, REPRESENTATIVES OF US MEDIA EXPECTED FOR ELECTIONS INCLUDE KATE WEBB OF UPI, KEN WHITING OF AP, LEWIS SIMONS OF WASHINGTON POST, DAVID ANDELMAN OF NYT AND ROY ROWAN OF TIME (LATTER THREE STILL UNCONFIRMED). UPI'S WEBB, THE FIRST TO ARRIVE, RECEIVED TRAVEL PERMIT IN RECORD TIME, HOPEFULLY A SIGN THAT INFORMATION DEPARTMENT IS GEARED UP FOR ELECTION. PROHIBITION ON ELECTIO VISITS TO TOWNS BELOW REGENCY (KABUPATEN) LEVEL REMAINS N EFFECT BUT WE SHOULD NOT PREJUDGE HOW RESTRICTIONS MAY ACTUALLY BE ENFORCED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT LOCAL INDONESIAN PRESS CONTINUES TO PROVIDE REASONABLY COMPLETE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 JAKART 05393 271002Z

COVERAGE OF MAJOR CAMPAIGN IRREGULARITIES AND HAS HEADLINED PDI AND PPP CONCERN REGARDING REPORTING OF VOTE COUNT.

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